

I CLAIM:

1. A method of manufacturing an object, comprising the steps of:
 - a) forming a support carrier of a shape-retaining material;
 - b) positioning a lower film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the carrier;
 - c) positioning an upper film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the lower film; and
 - d) sealing overlapping portions of the films together to form a sealed film assembly while the films are positioned on the carrier.
2. The method of claim 1; and the step of feeding the support carrier from a carrier roll through a sealing station at which the sealing is performed; and wherein each positioning step is performed by feeding the lower and upper films from respective film rolls through the sealing station.
3. The method of claim 1; and the steps of coating the lower and upper films with fusible coatings; and wherein the positioning steps are performed by feeding the lower and upper films with the fusible coatings facing each other.
4. The method of claim 1; and the step of conveying the support carrier on a silicone sealing belt through the sealing station.
5. The method of claim 1; and the step of adhering the lower film to the carrier simultaneously with performing the sealing step to maintain a correct positional relationship between the sealed film assembly and the carrier during manufacture.

6. The method of claim 1; and the step of laminating the lower film to the carrier prior to performing the sealing step.

7. The method of claim 1; and the step of cutting the films while the films are positioned on the carrier.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the cutting step is performed simultaneously with the sealing step.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein the cutting step is performed subsequently to the sealing step.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein the overlapping portions are sealed boundary areas extending at least partly along a periphery of the object to be manufactured, and wherein the cutting step is performed at least partly within the boundary areas.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the carrier has peripheral edges, and wherein the boundary areas are cut along a cutting line located at a spacing from the peripheral edges; and the step of removing the lower and upper films from the spacing.

12. The method of claim 10, wherein the carrier has peripheral edges, and wherein the boundary areas are cut along a cutting line located at a spacing from the peripheral edges; and the step of leaving the lower and upper films in the spacing.

13. The method of claim 2; and the step of cutting the carrier subsequently to the sealing step to form a sheet on which the sealed film assembly is supported.

14. The method of claim 1; and the step of printing on the sealed film assembly in registration with the carrier.

15. The method of claim 1; and the step of inserting an inflation valve in the sealed film assembly.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the lower and upper films overlap and contact each other over a surface area; and the step of adhering the lower and upper films together over the entire surface area of contact.

17. An arrangement for manufacturing an object, comprising:

- a) means for supplying a support carrier of a shape-retaining material;
- b) means for positioning a lower film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the carrier;
- c) means for positioning an upper film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the lower film; and
- d) means for sealing overlapping portions of the films together to form a sealed film assembly while the films are positioned on the carrier.

18. The arrangement of claim 17; and means for adhering the lower film to the carrier simultaneously with operation of the sealing means to maintain a correct positional relationship between the sealed film assembly and the carrier during manufacture.

19. The arrangement of claim 17; and means for cutting the films while the films are positioned on the carrier.

20. The arrangement of claim 17; and means for printing on the sealed film assembly in registration with the carrier.

21. A sealed film assembly, comprising:

- a) a support carrier of a shape-retaining material;

- b) a lower film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the carrier;
- c) an upper film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the lower film; and
- d) overlapping portions of the films being sealed together to form the sealed film assembly while the films are positioned on the carrier.

22. An inflatable film assembly, comprising:

- a) a pair of overlapping, flexible films having portions sealed together to bound an interior;
- b) an inlet on the films for admitting gas into the interior; and
- c) a valve extending between the inlet and the sealed portions, the valve having an intermediate portion adhered to one of the films.